

**James Madison University**  
**JMU Scholarly Commons**

---

MAD-RUSH Undergraduate Research Conference

Proceedings of the Fifth Annual MadRush  
Conference: Best Papers, Spring 2014

---

Mar 22nd, 10:15 AM - 11:30 AM

# The Unwanted Immigrant: The rise of Californian nativism from 1849-1860

Frank Anthony Bozich III  
*James Madison University*

Follow this and additional works at: <http://commons.lib.jmu.edu/madrush>



Part of the [Arts and Humanities Commons](#)

---

Frank Anthony Bozich III, "The Unwanted Immigrant: The rise of Californian nativism from 1849-1860" (March 22, 2014). *MAD-RUSH Undergraduate Research Conference*. Paper 1.  
<http://commons.lib.jmu.edu/madrush/2014/Immigration/1>

This Event is brought to you for free and open access by the Conference Proceedings at JMU Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in MAD-RUSH Undergraduate Research Conference by an authorized administrator of JMU Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact [dc\\_admin@jmu.edu](mailto:dc_admin@jmu.edu).

---

# THE UNWANTED IMMIGRANT

---

The Rise of Californian nativism from 1849-1860

HISTORY 395 FALL 2013

FRANK ANTHONY BOZICH III

Dr. Arndt

The journey was finally over. After more than a month of travel, the ship had landed. Thoughts of new lives, unaffected by the troubles of China raced through the minds of Chinese immigrants as they walked off their ships and into California. Most hoped that the new land would allow them to start a new life. Others hoped that they would be able to find the gold in this new mystical land. Numerous others wished this new place would allow them to make enough money to return to their families in China and live a happy life. Unfortunately, for the 34,933 Chinese who immigrated to California from the late 1840s to 1860, these hopes and dreams would never be realized.<sup>1</sup> For they encountered a new problem unlike anything they experienced in China. This new obstacle was white nativism.<sup>2</sup> From 1830-1860, white Americans and Chinese immigrants came to California to escape problems from their past and establish new lives. However once these two groups collided, white migrants began to violently exploit and harass their Chinese counterparts. Violence between these two groups slowly began to increase as nativist sentiments spread and Chinese immigration increased. However from 1849 to the early 1850's, white Americans transitioned from exploiting Chinese migrants for economic benefit to viewing them as an inferior race and committing lethal acts of violence against them. The social and religious differences between Chinese migrants and Americans of European descent played a large role in the exploitation of the Chinese. Ultimately, nativism became ingrained in Californian society as white Americans began to view Chinese as a threat to their

---

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Race for the United States, Regions, Divisions, and States: 1860 - Con., September 13, 2002, raw data, [Http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0056/tabA-19.pdf](http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0056/tabA-19.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> The policy of favoring the natives of a country over the immigrants Collins English Dictionary, 10th ed. (Glasgow: HarperCollins, 2009), s.v. "Nativism."

economic success and violence toward Chinese became more common due to the Californian government's support of anti-Chinese and nativist legislation.<sup>3</sup>

Before the first wave of Chinese came to California, many Chinese were experiencing much hardship as a result of the continual conflicts taking place in China. In 1839 the First Opium War began between Great Britain and the Qing Empire. This war began as a result of the Chinese government's desire to expel opium and all British merchants who sold it in order to protect China's people from the harmful effects of the drug. After a humiliating defeat in the First Opium War, the Chinese people realized that the Qing Empire had let the Great Middle Kingdom<sup>4</sup> become militarily and politically inferior to the smaller European powers of the west. This mismanagement of China by the Qing Empire caused civil unrest to develop throughout the country. Shortly after its defeat in the First Opium War, the Qing Empire found itself battling internal revolts and trying to manage an extremely unstable country. The largest of these revolts

---

<sup>3</sup> Research on Chinese immigration into California should begin with Sue Fawn Chung, *Asian American Experience: In Pursuit of Gold: Chinese American Miners and Merchants in the American West* (Champaign, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2011). Roger Daniels, *Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life*, 2nd ed. (New York: HarperCollins, 2002); Bill Ong Hing, *Making and Remaking Asian America Through Immigration Policy 1850-1990* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993); Benson Tong, *The Chinese Americans* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2000). The leading sources that explore the effect nativism had on Chinese immigrants and Californian society, see Yucheng Qin, *The Diplomacy of Nationalism: The Six Companies and China's Policy Toward Exclusion* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009); Anna Noel Naruta, *Creating Whiteness in California: Racialization Processes, Land, and Policy in the Context of California's Chinese Exclusion Movements, 1850 to 1910*, PHD Diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2006 (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Dissertations Publishing, 2006). Steve Spencer, *Race and Ethnicity: Culture, Identity and Representation* (London: New York: Routledge, 2006). Alexander Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California* (London, England: University of California Press, 1971). Ray A. Billington, *The Origins of Nativism in the United States, 1800-1844* (New York: Ayer Co Pub, 1974). For detailed journal articles on Chinese immigrants and nativism, see Mark Kanazawa, "Immigration, Exclusion, and Taxation: Anti-Chinese Legislation in Gold Rush California," *Journal of Economic History* 65, no. 3 (September 2005): 779-805. Edlie Wong, "Comparative Racialization, Immigration Law, and James Williams's Life and Adventures," *American Literature* 84, no. 4 (December 2012): 797-826. Important primary sources on Chinese confrontation with nativism in California, include Charles Westmoreland, *Majority Report of the Committee on Mines and Mining Interests* (Sacramento, CA: Committee, 1856). John Bigler, *An Analysis of the Chinese Question* (San Francisco: San Francisco Herald, 1852). For in-depth primary source newspaper articles on Chinese immigration and nativism, Weekly Alta California, comp., "The Chinese," *Weekly Alta California* (San Francisco, California), June 18, 1853, 5, sec. 24. Anonymous, "Estimate Number of Chinese in California," *Daily Placer Times and Transcript* (San Francisco, California), August 13, 1852, 4, sec. 741.

<sup>4</sup> The Chinese name China meaning that their nation was the center of civilization in the world.

against Qing rule was the Taiping Rebellion which lasted from 1850-1864. Led by Hong Xiuquan, who claimed to be the brother of Jesus, the Taiping rebellion sought to expel the Qing Dynasty and establish the Taiping Tianguo, the Heavenly Kingdom of Great Harmony. During the course of this conflict alone, an estimated 20 million lives, twice the number of people lost in World War I, were lost. This unstable environment and the massive destruction of villages and people's livelihoods as a result of continual uprisings caused numerous Chinese to immigrate to the United States. Another factor that inspired Chinese people to immigrate to United States was the rumor of gold and the promise of a new life which developed as a result of the Californian Gold Rush of 1849. These factors caused thousands of Chinese people, mainly from Guangdong, to leave by way of Canton and flood into the United States. Upon arrival to the United States, most of whom ended up in California, Chinese migrants encountered their American counterparts who were also seeking the promise of a new life.<sup>5</sup>

Similarly, white Americans began to move westward with the hope of escaping old problems and establishing a new life. For the Americans, the urge to expand westward began early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A leading advocate for American expansionism, John Quincy Adams wrote to his father stating that the whole continent of North America was destined to be under the control of a people who all shared the same language, customs, religion, and political principles. Adams' dream soon developed into a belief system known as Manifest Destiny.

Emerging in the 19th century, Manifest Destiny was the belief that white Americans, as a result of divine decree, had the duty to settle and exploit any resource on the land of the North

---

<sup>5</sup> Sue Fawn Chung, *Asian American Experience: In Pursuit of Gold: Chinese American Miners and Merchants in the American West* (Champaign, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2011), 1-6. Yucheng Qin, *The Diplomacy of Nationalism: The Six Companies and China's Policy Toward Exclusion* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009), 13-22. Roger Daniels, *Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life*, 2nd ed. (New York: HarperCollins, 2002), 239-250. Jonathan D. Spence, *God's Chinese Son: The Taiping Heavenly Kingdom of Hong Xiuquan* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997). Benson Tong, *The Chinese Americans* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 2000).

American continent. With this belief system supporting their actions, Americans slowly began to push westward in the belief that they were doing the will of god. As a result of this belief however, it became common practice for white Americans to vanquish or harm any person of a different race or religion found on land they wanted because they had inferior claim to the land and its resources compared white Americans. For those who supported Manifest Destiny and those seeking a new place to start over, the beginning of the Californian Gold Rush was a dream come true.<sup>6</sup>

With the support of the United States government, Americans began to move westward in wagon trains which followed a series of trails. The most common trail for those interested in the Californian Gold Rush was the California Trail which followed the Oregon Trail until Fort Hall, Idaho where it broke off and headed for Sutter's Fort, California. During this 2,000 mile journey, Americans covered the harsh terrain of the United States interior encountering great obstacles along the way. These obstacles included the never ending plains of the Midwest, the barren deserts of Nevada and the seemingly impenetrable Sierra Nevada mountain range.<sup>7</sup> In addition to the great physical hurdles encountered during the journey, migrants also had to face biological obstacles. The most common biological obstacles were diseases that involved gastrointestinal illnesses, the worst of which was Cholera. Normally resulting in unspecified diarrheas and dysenteries, Cholera was extremely lethal for American migrants. Often transmitted through the consumption of food and water, Cholera caused its victims to die as a result of the dehydration caused by the loss of the victim's bodily fluids. By the time these difficult challenges had been

---

<sup>6</sup> Walter A. McDougall, *Promised Land, Crusader State: The American Encounter with the World Since 1776* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1997), 57-100. Robert J. Miller, *Native America, Discovered and Conquered: Thomas Jefferson, Lewis & Clark, and Manifest Destiny* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2006), 117-160.

<sup>7</sup> The Sierra Nevada mountain range is located between California and Nevada and runs approximately 400 miles from north to south.

overcome, families had often lost numerous possessions and loved ones. Despite these losses, after a grueling journey of approximately four and a half to five months, American migrants had arrived in a land would grant them new prosperous lives. However upon arriving in California, American emigrants soon found the widely advertised gold fields occupied by other migrants also seeking to start a new.<sup>8</sup>

As the California gold rush went on, the American migrants soon came face to face with other immigrant who also sought to establish new lives. With rumors of lakes and mountains filled with gold spread, other immigrants began to stake out their claims in the Californian gold fields. Participating in both mining and ranching activities, *Californios* emerged as the first settlers of non-Northern European descent to partake in economic activities during the Gold Rush years. Originating from the previous Spanish and Mexican rule over California, Californios had chosen to stay in California after California was given to the United States in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848. During the years following the United States annexation of California, *Californios* practiced relative autonomy and were instrumental in developing California's agriculture economy. Although *Californios* and their ancestors had lived in California for almost 100 years, white Americans still regarded them as foreigners. As a result, numerous Californios saw their lands and properties taken away in the wake of white nativism. This loss of long held rights by minority groups in California was typical once nativism gained a foot hold in Californian society. In addition to Californios, European migrants such as the French, Germans, Italians, and Britons also came to California with the hope of striking it rich. Besides the hope of acquiring great wealth, most Europeans immigrated to avoid the new social

---

<sup>8</sup> Mary Hill, *Gold: The California Story* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1999), XI-3. John D. Unruh, *The Plains Across: The Overland Emigrants on the Trans-Mississippi West, 1840-60*, 1st ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 28-51.

reforms that were put in place in response to the Revolutions of 1848. Out of all the Europeans who migrated to California, it was the Irish who came in the greatest numbers. Attempting to escape the hardships of the Great Irish Potato Famine, Irish migrated in massive numbers to the east coast of the United States with the hope of establishing a new life. Almost immediately upon arrival, Irish immigrants were treated as inferior group of peoples on account of their religion and cultural traditions. In addition, Irish migrants faced extreme nativist sentiments because it was believed that Irish migrants stole jobs from hard working white protestant Americans. After hearing about the discovery of gold in California, Irish migrants again moved in an attempt to escape the nativist persecution they faced in the East and start anew in the West. Upon arriving in California, Irish migrants soon realized that the Chinese were the main focus of nativist aggression in California much like they had been in the East. Irish immigrants adopted anti-Chinese attitudes for numerous reasons. First, Irish immigrants viewed Chinese immigrants as a threat to their economic success. Besides viewing Chinese immigrants as a threat to their economic success, numerous Irish migrants adopted nativist beliefs in an attempt remain out of the gaze of Californian nativists.<sup>9</sup> By adopting nativist sentiments, Irish immigrants were able to achieve a degree of Americanization. Over time, Irish immigrants became one of the most outspoken anti-Chinese groups in California often partaking in extremely violent acts against Chinese migrants.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> Anonymous, "The Chinese in California, 1850-1925," Loc.gov, accessed November 23, 2013, <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/connections/chinese-cal/file.html>.

<sup>10</sup> Anonymous, "The Californios," Pbs.org, 1998, accessed November 11, 2013, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/kids/goldrush/california.html>. Charles Hughes, "The Decline of the Californios: The Case of San Diego, 1846-1856," review of *Decline of the Californios*, *The Journal of San Diego History*, summer 1975, <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/75summer/decline.htm>. Malcom Campbell, "Ireland's Furthest Shores: Irish Immigrant Settlement in Nineteenth-Century California and Eastern Australia," *Pacific Historical Review* 71, no. 1 (February 2002): 87-90.



Despite the reasons why migrants from all over the globe decided to immigrate to California almost all had similar experiences. Beginning with James W. Marshall's discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill in Coloma, California in 1848, rumors of gold soon spread throughout the globe. Eager miners from different parts of the world soon flooded into California in search of the precious metal. Often focusing most of their time along the banks of rivers and streams, early miners often engaged in a work intensive mining technique known as panning. Used as the oldest form of gold mining, panning was very cheap to perform, but often yielded little product. As the gold rush continued, new more elaborate methods for mining gold soon developed such as draining rivers, then sluicing the newly exposed river bed and hydraulic mining. Although these new methods produced a greater yield of gold they often caused conditions to be more dangerous. Due to these dangerous mining techniques, injuries and fatalities were quite common throughout mining camps. In addition disease such as cholera only made mining for gold even harder for miners. According to *The Alta California*, the conditions in which mining took place were extremely severe in the city of Nevada in July, 1850. Miners suffered from a lack of profit as was as the inability to access basic necessities such as water. *The Alta California* goes even further and states that after another winter the miners would be forced to leave their dig sites due to the horrible conditions.<sup>11</sup>

Amidst these conditions, miner's hard work often met with little success, causing most to actually lose money during the gold rush. Consequently, miners often took what little earnings they had and turned to salons and gambling houses for comfort. These conditions were worse for foreign miners. Besides dealing with horrible conditions, foreign miners also had to deal with

---

<sup>11</sup> Oakland Museum of California, "Gold Fever," Museumca.org, 1998, Prospecting, accessed November 11, 2013, <http://www.museumca.org/goldrush/fever13.html>. Anonymous, "Sacramento Intelligence," *The Alta California* (San Francisco), July 13, 1850, News/Opinion sec.

being racially persecuted by their white nativist neighbors. Armed with Manifest Destiny and current nativist rhetoric, white miners began to forcibly remove the Chinese miners from their own private mining claims. Despite the numerous other immigrant groups that were present in California, nativists targeted most of their discrimination towards the Chinese. Although unique in its own way, this discrimination towards people of Chinese descent occurred due to preexisting racial and nativist rhetoric which developed as a result of previous European encounters with the Chinese.<sup>12</sup>

Originating as a result of the opium trade, these racial attitudes developed when Europeans started to depict the people of China as lazy, stubborn, amoral, drug addicts. This negative view towards Chinese soon developed into a racist one as Europeans began to regard Chinese as inferior on account of their cultural traditions and the inability of the Qing government to effectively organize the country. The Qing Empire encountered problems in the areas of feeding its populace and maintain infrastructure throughout the country. For these reasons China and its people soon became regarded as culturally and technologically backwards. After the development of this racist attitude towards Chinese, Europeans turned to science in an attempt to scientifically prove that people of Chinese descent were inferior to Europeans due to biological factors. Found in the early scientific schools of Cultural and Biological Anthropology, these biological factors, which argued that the white race was superior to all the other races of the world, ranged from the belief that whites were superior as a result of having bigger brains to having lived in a northern climate. Eventually racist rhetoric based in “science” determined that peoples of Eastern and South East Asian descent were members of an inferior race known as “Mongoloids”. Originating in the work of Samuel George Morton, the human race began to be

---

<sup>12</sup> Oakland Museum of California, "Gold Fever," Museumca.org, 1998, Miner's Life, accessed November 11, 2013, <http://www.museumca.org/goldrush/fever12.html>.

viewed as being comprised of four different races, Caucasian, Asian or Mongoloid, Native American, and African, rather than one. In his work *Crania Americana*, Morton argued that he could tell the intellectual order of all the races by measuring their brain sizes. Morton's intellectual order placed Caucasians, as the most sophisticated part of humanity, followed in descending order by Asians, Native Americans and finally Africans. Morton's work began to draw a following rather quickly as numerous physicians and scientists began to follow his teachings. Of these followers the two most famous were George Gliddon, an American Egyptologist, and Josiah C. Nott, an American physician. Together these two men began working to support Morton's theories with their own work. This support finally came in the form of a scholarly monograph entitled *Types of Mankind: Or Ethnological Researches*. In this monograph the two argued that not only were Caucasians the most superior race on the planet but that the white race came about as a result of a completely separate lineage of ancestors. Known as polygenism, the belief that all races emerge as a result of completely separate origins helped further develop the notion of white dominance over the world. As the racial theories of Morton, Gliddon, and Nott continued to spread so too did nativist and racist sentiments toward non-white members of society.<sup>13</sup>

While these racist views towards Chinese people originated in Europe, these views became significantly more racist once white Americans began forming nativist movements and parties. First originating on the United States Eastern Coast, these movements were formed with the goal of excluding Irish and German influence from American society. One of the most

---

<sup>13</sup> Ray A. Billington, *The Origins of Nativism in the United States, 1800-1844* (New York: Ayer Co Pub, 1974). Friedrich Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of History, 1828-1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 152-173. Steve Spencer, *Race and Ethnicity: Culture, Identity and Representation* (London: New York: Routledge, 2006), 31-37. Josiah C. Nott and George Gliddon, *Types of Mankind: Ethnological Researches*, 6th ed. (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo and Company, 1854), 70-80, 81-87, 180-190, 406-410.

influential of these nativist movements was known as the Know Nothing movement. Originating in New York in 1843, The Know Nothing movement was an anti-Catholic organization which sought to rid American society of any Catholic influence. The most pronounced of these Catholic influences on American society at the time was foreign Catholic immigrants such as the Germans, and more notably the Irish. Seeing these new immigrants as the allies of tyranny and opponents of material prosperity, the Know Nothing movement organized into a political party called the Native American or American party and ran on a platform focused on excluding foreign immigrants. Although the movement faced difficulties getting anti-foreign legislation passed, the movement made life extremely difficult for immigrant workers. Movements such as these soon spread their ideas throughout the country taking a more anti-foreign stance rather than just an anti-Catholic one. These beliefs soon began to apply to all foreign peoples, hitting those of Chinese descent the hardest. Chinese immigrants were hit harder than any other foreign group. Not only were white Americans discriminating against them, but so to were other foreigners, the Irish being the worst of these. Due to these wide spread anti-foreign movements and belief systems, Chinese migrants encountered extreme racism and nativism when they sought to start a new life in California. Hatred towards Chinese migrants was further enhanced by the losses many white Americans suffered on their way to California, the economic competition that developed between Chinese and white American migrants, and anti- Chinese sentiments held by other foreigners. Eventually these racist beliefs held by white Americans became more than just beliefs as numerous Americans began to search for ways to eliminate the Chinese threat.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> Alexander Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California* (London, England: University of California Press, 1971), 30-37. Anna Noel Naruta, *Creating Whiteness in California: Racialization Processes, Land, and Policy in the Context of California's Chinese Exclusion Movements, 1850 to 1910*, diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2006 (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Dissertations Publishing, 2006), 1-10.

After only a short period of time, tensions between white nativists and Chinese migrants reached a boiling point. Starting as early as 1849, white miners in California demanded that all foreign miners be banned and forever excluded from working in mines. After realizing the government of California was not going to do anything to help them, miners took matters into their own hands. According to numerous contemporary accounts, native-born miners began forcing foreign miners from their dig sights and claiming these sights for themselves. Once these nativist miners began forcing off foreign miners it was only a matter of time before they began focusing specifically on Chinese immigrants. This occurred because Chinese miners often were more successful because Chinese had more experience in mining techniques due to years of traditional mining in china. Beginning in Tuolumne County in 1849, miners passed local ordinances restricting Chinese miners from actively working on mining claims which were rightfully owned by Chinese immigrants. These anti-Chinese sentiments developed with the help of the American Know-Nothing Party and the Democratic party of California. Shortly after this, numerous other counties began to pass their own local ordinances in an effort to eliminate Chinese miners from mining land which they believed should be used only by white Americans. Coming under massive pressure from miners, the government of California decided to act and developed a law which would help protect California's miners. Instituted in 1850, the Foreign Miners Tax required all foreign miners to pay 20 dollars per month to obtain a license to mine gold. Through this law, the Californian government sought to increase the state's revenue by exploiting the undesirables of the state. This made life for Chinese immigrants extremely hard as a large amount of their income had to be dedicated to paying off the state government.<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup> Mark Kanazawa, "Immigration, Exclusion, and Taxation: Anti-Chinese Legislation in Gold Rush California," *Journal of Economic History* 65, no. 3 (September 2005): 784-787. Sucheng Chan, *This Bittersweet Soil: The Chinese in California Agriculture, 1860-1910* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1989), 58.

This tax was well received throughout the state immediately upon its institution. In an article from *The Weekly Pacific News* on June 1, 1850, newspaper writers were celebrating the law as an effective way to keep foreigners from exploiting American's rights. In addition, the law also criticized native Californians who did not support the law and viewed it as illegal and oppressive, stating that they were taking the side of aliens rather than that of the state and her citizens. Receiving resistance from minority miners as well as sympathetic white Californians, the law was often protested through newspapers. However when white Californians went against the Foreign Miners Tax, they were often regarded as traitors and un-American. After the Foreign Miners Tax's institutionalization, newspapers began to report confrontations between foreigners and natives throughout California. On June 1, 1850, *The Alta California* reported that during a town meeting a Mexican native drew a pistol on a native-born American. Although no shots were fired, native-born Americans armed with guns filled the streets and ultimately caused one known injury. Instances like these made life only harder for Chinese immigrants as Californians became more and more violent towards foreigners.<sup>16</sup>

As Chinese immigration began to increase, natives began to view this new emerging populace as the most severe threat to white Californian's rights. First, Californians sought to exploit this new source of labor by sending them to work in areas of the economy such as agriculture and mining. An article from *The Alta California* on March 31, 1851, describes how the incoming wave of Chinese would be relocated to work in either agricultural or mining fields of production. In addition, this article made the distinction that Chinese immigrants and their "celestial brethren" were significantly different from their white counter parts. By referring to

---

<sup>16</sup> Anonymous, "An Act for the better regulation of the Mines, and the government of Foreign Miners," *Statutes of California* (1850), pp. 221–23. Anonymous, "Tax Upon Foreign Miners," *Weekly Pacific News* (San Francisco, CA), June 1, 1850, News/Opinion sec. Leo. S, "Sonora- Disturbance in the Mines," *The Alta California* (San Francisco, CA), June 1, 1850, News/Opinion sec.

Chinese immigrants as celestial, the writers of the article were purposely attacking the Chinese belief that their homeland was divinely given to them and ruled by a god-emperor.<sup>17</sup>

This desire to control the oncoming masses of Chinese immigrants changed however as white Californians soon began to regard Chinese as a threat that could not be controlled and needed to be dealt with immediately. This change in belief soon became a popular conviction amongst workers as anti-Chinese sentiment began to spread deep into Californian society.

Realizing that anti-Chinese sentiments were widespread amongst the working class in 1852, John Bigler, the governor of California, began openly attacking the rights of Chinese miners throughout the state. Bigler, running on the Democratic platform, became the first Californian governor to complete a term in office and then win reelection. Bigler was able to secure the office of governor twice because as a rising politician he gained the support of white miners by supporting their beliefs that Chinese miners were a direct threat to their livelihood. After winning the election for governor, Bigler began to attack Chinese miners with the hope of removing them from Californian mines. In a speech given to the Californian State Legislature in 1852, Bigler argued that Chinese immigration was a gigantic threat which could no longer be ignored. He claimed that if left unchecked, Chinese immigration would cause great damage to the state and her citizens. Showing how severe the Chinese threat was, Bigler said that if left unchecked, white Californian miners would lose their jobs and would be left unemployed thus eliminating a huge section of California's economy. Claiming to have found a solution to the Chinese, Bigler argued that in order to stop the Chinese threat, the state legislature needed to increase taxes on the

---

<sup>17</sup> Anonymous, "California an Agricultural State," *The Alta California* (San Francisco, CA), March 31, 1851, News/Opinion sec.

current Chinese populace and restrict all those that had not sworn away allegiance to China herself, from working the mines.<sup>18</sup>

Widespread support for the governor's speech was evident in newspapers throughout the state. On the May 1, 1852, *The Sacramento Weekly Union* stated that the governor had the will of the people and the state government at his back in his quest to solve the Chinese issue. As a result of the state government displaying anti-Chinese sentiments and a general fear towards Chinese immigration, people throughout the state soon began to fear the oncoming waves of immigration as well. On August 13, 1852, *The Daily Placer Times and Transcript* reported that the number of Chinese immigrants coming to California would soon equal that of all other immigration to Californian from all other parts of the world. According to the writers, the purpose of its article was to provide an accurate estimate of the number of Chinese in California for the benefit of their readers. While many throughout the state believed Chinese migrants were the worst kind of foreigner, it was not until 1853 that newspapers began to comment on how Chinese were the most hated class of foreigner. On June 6<sup>th</sup>, 1853, *The Weekly Alta California*, reported that popular sentiment against the Chinese was so widely spread that those Chinese seeking to gain the rights and privileges of citizens would never realize their dream. Referring to them as the "bottom of the pit", this article also stated how people throughout the state regarded them as worse than beasts that prey on inferior meat. For these nativists the main section of their argument was that because the Chinese were racially inferior to whites they did not deserve to enjoy the rights their white neighbors were enjoying. This increase in nativism continued to

---

<sup>18</sup> John Bigler, *An Analysis of the Chinese Question* (San Francisco: San Francisco Herald, 1852).



develop as numerous white nativists began to become more violent as a result of Anti-Chinese sentiments by the state.<sup>19</sup>

Once the government of California and its politicians began openly supporting anti-Chinese and nativist sentiments, violence began to erupt between the two groups. Some of this violence was inspired by the desire of white miners' desire to kick Chinese miners off their claims. However as nativism spread throughout California, nativists began to violently attack Chinese and their civil rights solely because of the fact that they were Chinese. Although not yet physically violent, by as early as March 1854, it was becoming clear that Chinese civil rights were in the process of being severely abused. On March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1854, *The Daily Placer Times and Transcript* reported that Mr. Pickersgill, a white Californian, stumbled across a Chinese man being beaten by other Chinese. Believing the Chinese man that was being beaten to be the victim of an assault, Mr. Pickersgill arrested who he believed to be the assailant. Once this matter was brought to court, the case was thrown out because, all of the Chinese witnesses said there had either not been an assault or that the Chinese man had only been pushed. *The Daily Placer Times and Transcript* remarked that if Mr. Pickersgill had seen the commencement of the event, his word would have been enough to overturn all of the Chinese eyewitness in the case. This remark demonstrates just how far Californian society had come where one white individual's word could overturn that of multiple Chinese witnesses.<sup>20</sup>

The attack on Chinese civil rights only increased however as the year moved forward. Known as *People v Hall*, this court case surrounded the murder of a Chinese miner, Ling Sing,

---

<sup>19</sup> Anonymous, "Governor's Special Message," *Sacramento Weekly Union* (Sacramento, CA), May 1, 1852, News/Opinions sec. Anonymous, "Estimate Number of Chinese in California," *Daily Placer Times and Transcript* (San Francisco, California), August 13, 1852, News/Opinion sec. *Weekly Alta California*, comp., "The Chinese," *Weekly Alta California* (San Francisco, California), June 18, 1853, News/Opinion sec.

<sup>20</sup> Anonymous, "More Chinese Lying," *Daily Placer Times and Transcript* (San Francisco), March 3, 1854, News/Opinion sec.

by a white Californian, George W. Hall. The main evidence against Hall in this case was compiled by three eyewitness accounts of other Chinese miners. After reviewing clause 14 of the Criminal Act, which stated that no person of black, mulatto, or Indian descent should be able to give evidence in favor of, or against a person of white descent, the Supreme Court made its decision. On October 1, 1854 Judge Ch. J. Murray delivered the verdict which stated that due to the generalized language used in the 14<sup>th</sup> clause of the Criminal Act, all peoples of non-white descent, including Chinese, had no right to prosecute against or aide white people in the Californian court system. In other words, no person of Chinese descent had any right to bring a white Californian to court. By committing to this decision, California's state government became fully committed to the ideas of both the anti-Chinese and nativist causes. As a result of this decision, Chinese individuals found themselves defenseless against the violent actions of their white nativist neighbors. According to an article in *The Daily Placer Times and Transcript* on October 9, 1854, Judge Ch. J. Murray stated that if the case ever became doubtful he would have been forced to make his decision based on the popular opinion of the time. Due to this statement *The Daily Placer Times and Transcript* referred to Judge Ch. J. Murray as a "learned judge", demonstrating their approval of the judge's approach to solving legal matters between whites and nonwhites.<sup>21</sup>

Soon the death and abuse of Chinese immigrants became just another common aspect of Californian society. On March 24<sup>th</sup>, 1855, Charles De Long recounted what he viewed as just another normal day. During this day De Long recorded in his journal that he had a stiff neck, prospected the creek, and shot a "Chinamen". For De Long, the shooting of a "Chinamen" was just another part of his daily activities as he stated that he often hunted Chinese while he looked

---

<sup>21</sup> Anonymous, "People; Respondents; George W. Hall," *Daily Placer Times and Transcript* (San Francisco), October 9, 1854, News/Opinion sec.

for gold. To him the life of a “Chinamen” was basically worthless and its only real value coming in the form of entertainment which one receives from abusing a “Chinamen”. De Long was not alone in his opinion of people of Chinese descent however. After 1854, most Californians began to view the existence of Chinese on their shores as a burden. This new found belief held by Californians began to spread rapidly and only further increase nativist prompted violence on Chinese by Californian citizens.<sup>22</sup>

As the government of California continued to support anti-Chinese and nativist beliefs, the nativist sentiments among the state’s white population flourished. Whites from all over the state began placing their Chinese neighbors, regardless of personal traits, into a set stereotype. This stereotype portrayed the Chinese as a race of thieves, liars, and heathens who sought to upset and overturn the United States’ democracy. Although something similar to this prototype had existed since the British first encountered the Chinese, it became renewed in California once the white population saw that they had the support of their government to discriminate against people of Chinese descent. *The Daily Democratic State Journal* displayed this nativist view in one of its late January issues. On January 29<sup>th</sup>, 1856, the newspaper reported that two Chinese men had stolen money from the city of Sacramento and fled shortly after. According to the newspaper, these two Chinese men were following the same amoral and villainous footsteps that all their brethren from the land of China were bounded to follow. To this newspaper and its readers, the actions of these two Chinese men represented the evil nature of the Chinese race as a whole.<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> Charles E. De Long, ""California's Bantam Cock": The Journals of Charles E. De Long, 1854-1863," ed. Carl I. Wheat, *California Historical Society Quarterly* 9, no. 1 (March 1930): 194-213, 337-363.

<sup>23</sup> Anonymous, "Chinese Money Thieves," *Daily Democratic State Journal* (Sacramento), January 29, 1856, News/Opinion sec.

This opinion towards Chinese immigrants was called into question however when a bill, advocated by the economically advantaged members of the Californian state legislature, was proposed which would reduce the tax rate on people of Chinese descent. In charge of analyzing the situation around the bill and the bill itself, the Californian Committee on mines and mining interests was asked to investigate the matter. Although the committee was divided in its support of the new bill, the minority outlined its objections to the bill in a document to the state legislature entitled *Minority Report of the Committee on Mines and Mining Interests*. Within this document the committee argues that the greatest threat to California's survival was the Chinese threat and that if left unaddressed could spell disaster for future generations. This minority also argued that the desire of the Californian state legislature to reduce the existing tax on Chinese immigrants negatively affected the livelihood of white miners. According to this committee this existing tax provided the much needed motivation for Chinese people to eventually leave the state. In addition, the committee argued that the Chinese population of California was an undesirable one and should not be allowed to have the same rights as other Californian citizens as stated in the majority report. Out of all the reasons however why the committee did not want to reduce the tax on the Chinese populace, the one they stressed the most was the fact that the Chinese populace wanted to work in Californian mines. The committee stated that although it was the duty of all good Christians to illuminate the dark heathen places of the world with god's gospel, it would gladly ignore this sacred duty so that the Chinese never worked in another Californian mine again. Realizing the importance of Asian trade, the committee stated that trade between China and California should continue; however, Chinese immigration to California should be stopped at all costs. Unlike the minority members of the committee, the majority members believed that the tax on Chinese people should be reduced and all Chinese people

should be granted the rights of citizens. Although the majority wanted Chinese immigrants to remain in California, this desire only came about due to nativist sentiments similar to the minority of the committee. Unlike the earlier sentiments of the time this committee viewed Chinese immigrants as children that the state needed to protect. Arguing that the Chinese were a weak people, this committee only wanted to keep Chinese people within the state so that they could continue exploiting them for their labor. These two opinions held by the committee on mines and mining interest demonstrates how as nativism increased within Californian society and how nativism itself began to differ on the best way to deal with the Chinese problem.<sup>24</sup>

By 1856, nativism had become so entrenched in Californian society that all white Americans or immigrants viewed people of Chinese descent as lesser beings. Although there was a disagreement about what was the best way to deal with this unwanted population, nativism and the racism that came with it was part of Californian culture. In the final years of the 1850s, nativism continued to spread throughout the state. In an effort to band together and fight this overwhelming force, Chinese immigrants formed ethnic enclaves comprised solely of Chinese and Taiwanese peoples. Known as “Chinatowns”, these communities began to arise throughout the state of California. As the state continued to support legislation inspired by nativist beliefs, these Chinatowns became the only form of support for Chinese immigrants. By 1860, this separation of whites and Chinese was just another part of Californian society. Finally achieving widespread support, nativism became an extremely influential part of Californian society which helped lead to the passage much more extremely radical anti-Chinese legislation such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. Within a relatively short time period, nativism was able to

---

<sup>24</sup> S. H. Dosh, John D. Scellen, and J. W. Mandeville, *Minority Report of the Committee on Mines and Mining Interests* (Sacramento: Committee, 1856). Charles Westmoreland, *Majority Report of the Committee on Mines and Mining Interests* (Sacramento, Calif: Committee, 1856).

flourish in California because the state's government gradually began to support the cause. Nativism as seen through this study has the ability to subjugate a group of people to immense hardships and sufferings. As seen through the ease in which nativism developed between 1849 and 1860, this study should serve as a lesson on how quickly anti-foreigner public opinion can influence a government to begin discriminating against a minority section of its populace.

### **Annotated Bibliography**

#### **Primary Sources**

*The Alta California* (San Francisco, CA), 1850.

This newspaper article provides an excellent account of a disturbance between Mexican and White miners following the institutionalization of the Foreign Miners Tax. This

source is important because it shows how tensions between the white and nonwhite populations of California began to increase.

*The Alta California* (San Francisco), 1850.

This newspaper article reports the conditions that miners in the Californian town of Nevada were going through in 1850. This article is important to my topic because it offers a unique perspective on the conditions miners faced during the gold rush years.

*The Alta California* (San Francisco, CA), 1851.

This newspaper article provides an excellent account of how the next wave of Chinese immigrants would find work in the mining or agricultural sectors of California's economy. This is important to my topic because it demonstrates how Californians had racially based stereotypes of Chinese migrants as early as 1851.

Bigler, John. *An Analysis of the Chinese Question*. San Francisco: San Francisco Herald, 1852.

In this speech delivered to the Californian legislature in 1852, John Bigler argued that Chinese immigration was extremely harmful to the interests of California and needed to be stopped at all costs. In order to stop Chinese immigration, Bigler stated that the state should increase taxation on Chinese immigrants and restrict them from working in mines. This source relates to my topic because it shows extreme anti-Chinese sentiments as early as 1852 in California.

*Daily Democratic State Journal* (Sacramento), 1856.

This newspaper article describes how money was stolen from a bank in Sacramento by two Chinese thieves. This article is important to my topic because it demonstrates how the Californian populace grouped their Chinese neighbors into a set ethnic profile.

*Daily Placer Times and Transcript* (San Francisco), 1852

Located in San Francisco, this newspaper described the amount of Chinese immigrants that immigrated to California by 1852 and argues that the number of Chinese immigrants in California will only increase because of the difficulties Californians had within their mines. This is relevant to my topic because it showed the number of Chinese people that immigrated to California by the mid-19th century and displayed this newspaper's reaction to this surge in Chinese immigration.

*Daily Placer Times and Transcript* (San Francisco), 1854.

This newspaper article provides an excellent look at the opinion of Californians towards

the ruling of the Supreme Court case *People v Hall*.

*Daily Placer Times and Transcript* (San Francisco), 1854.

This newspaper article displays how nativism had penetrated so deep into Californian society that the opinion of one person was more valued than the opinions of multiple people all because of the one man's race.

De Long, Charles E. "'California's Bantam Cock': The Journals of Charles E. De Long, 1854-1863." Edited by Carl I. Wheat. *California Historical Society Quarterly* 9, no. 1 (March 1930): 194-213.

In these journal entries, the daily interactions of a Californian marshal and his Chinese neighbors is described in great detail. This is key to my topic because it demonstrates how nativism had become so powerful in California by 1856 that it was socially acceptable to kill Chinese person for simple being Chinese.

Nott, Josiah C., and George Gliddon. *Types of Mankind: Ethnological Researches*. 6th ed. Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo and Company, 1854.

This monograph offers a detailed account of how humanity is split into four separate and different races. In addition, this monograph lists the races of mankind in order of superiority. This Source is instrumental to my topic because it demonstrates the scientific studies which helped create the backing of much of the nativist rhetoric in California.

*Sacramento Weekly Union* (Sacramento, CA), 1852.

This newspaper article describes Californians reactions to Governor Bigler's speak which condemned Chinese immigration. This is important to my topic because it shows how deep nativism was entrenched in Californian society by 1852.

U.S. Census Bureau. Race for the United States, Regions, Divisions, and States: 1860 - Con. September 13, 2002. Raw data.  
[Http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0056/tabA-19.pdf](http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0056/tabA-19.pdf).

Provided the accurate number of Chinese immigrants who had migrated to California by 1860.

*Weekly Alta California* (San Francisco, California), 1853.

Based in San Francisco, This newspaper reported on how wide spread anti-Chinese sentiment was throughout the state of California; arguing that it was the most hated class throughout the state. This is important to my topic because it demonstrates far nativism and racism had entrenched themselves in Californian society in 1853.



*Weekly Alta California* (San Francisco), 1853

Based in San Francisco, this newspaper reported on how wide spread anti-Chinese sentiment was throughout the state of California; arguing that it was the most hated class throughout the state. This is important to my topic because it demonstrates far nativism and racism had entrenched themselves in Californian society in 1853.

*Weekly Pacific News* (San Francisco, CA), 1850.

This newspaper article describes how the Foreign miners tax was an excellent law and safeguarded the rights of native white Californians. This source is important to my topic because it demonstrates how Californians began persecuting other Californians for not supporting nativist beliefs.

Westmoreland, Charles. *Majority Report of the Committee on Mines and Mining Interests*. Sacramento, Calif: Committee, 1856.

In this report to the California state legislature in 1856, the Committee on Mines and Mining Interests argues that the State of California should reduce taxing Chinese immigrants. This is important to my topic because it demonstrates how much the state of California was effected by nativism and racism in the late 1850's.

Dosh, S. H., John D. Scellen, and J. W. Mandeville. *Minority Report of the Committee on Mines and Mining Interests*. Sacramento: Committee, 1856.

In this report to the Californian state legislature, the minority of the Committee on Mines and Mining Interests argues to keep the current taxes on Chinese miners which had come up for review. This source is key in demonstrating how entrenched with nativism California had become by 1856.

## Secondary Sources

Anonymous. "The Californios." Pbs.org. 1998. Accessed November 11, 2013.  
<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/kids/goldrush/california.html>.

This website article offers a brief history of Californios in California and the problems they faced during the gold rush years. This article is key to my topic because it demonstrates the effect nativism can have on other minority group who considered themselves native to California.

Billington, Ray A. *The Origins of Nativism in the United States, 1800-1844*. New York: Ayer Co Pub, 1974.

Provides an excellent account of the development of nativism in the United States. This source is important to my topic because it discusses which parties were responsible for spreading nativist beliefs across the United States.

Campbell, Malcom. "Ireland's Furthest Shores: Irish Immigrant Settlement in Nineteenth-Century California and Eastern Australia." *Pacific Historical Review* 71, no. 1 (February 2002): 87-90.

This Journal article offers detailed information on the Irish immigrants who migrated to California during the gold rush. This is an important monograph for my topic because it shows how Irish immigrants became very strong advocates of the anti-Chinese movement.

Chan, Sucheng. *This Bittersweet Soil: The Chinese in California Agriculture, 1860-1910*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1989.

This source gives an excellent account of some of the nativist opposition Chinese migrants faced during the early years of the Californian gold rush. This source is important to my topic because it provides some of the early actions of nativists to excluded Chinese workers from Californian society.

Chung, Sue Fawn. *Asian American Experience: In Pursuit of Gold : Chinese American Miners and Merchants in the American West*. Champaign, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2011.

Chung offers a well detailed monograph on the push and pull factors that caused Chinese immigrants to immigrate to the United States in the 19th century. In addition, Chung's monograph offers much needed primary sources in the way of maps and statistical evidence.

*Collins English Dictionary*. 10th ed. Glasgow: HarperCollins, 2009.

Gives a great definition of nativism.

Daniels, Roger. *Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life*. 2nd ed. New York: HarperCollins, 2002.

Daniels offers a great description of immigration to the United States, especially in regards to immigration from the Asian continent. Also, this monograph offers an in-depth description of how nativism helped influence immigration policies.

Hegel, Friedrich. *Lectures on the Philosophy of History, 1828–1830*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975.

Provides an account of the way in which certain races should be looked by historians. This source argues that ancient non-European civilizations were just an incomplete step to achieving the perfect civilization.

Hill, Mary. *Gold: The California Story*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1999.

Provides an excellent description of the hardships endured by migrants who traveled across the United States.

Hing, Bill Ong. *Making and Remaking Asian America Through Immigration Policy 1850-1990*. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1993.

Hing focuses on how people of Asian descent were affected by immigration policies made from 1850-1990 in three main areas of life: educational performance, political participation, and self-identity.

Hughes, Charles. "The Decline of the Californios: The Case of San Diego, 1846-1856." Review of *Decline of the Californios*. *The Journal of San Diego History*, 1975.  
<http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/75summer/decline.htm>.

This book review offers a quick summary of Leonard Pitt's journal article Decline of the Californios, which offers detailed information on the situation of Californios during the early gold rush years. This is important to my topic because it shows how nativism effected more than just the Chinese when it came to California.

Kanazawa, Mark. "Immigration, Exclusion, and Taxation: Anti-Chinese Legislation in Gold Rush California." *Journal of Economic History* Vol. 65, no. 3 (September 2005): 779-805.

Mark Kanazawa interprets the emergence of exclusionary legislation towards Chinese immigrants as emerging when it did because the California state economy no longer relied on the work of Chinese immigrants as it did in the years previously. In addition, Kanazawa offers a detailed description of the Anti-Chinese legislation which was made during the Californian Gold Rush onward.

McDougall, Walter A. *Promised Land, Crusader State: The American Encounter with the World Since 1776*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1997.

This source provides an extremely detailed account of John Quincy Adams and his belief in Manifest Destiny. This source was key in providing much needed detail on the true ideological nature of Manifest Destiny.

Miller, Robert J. *Native America, Discovered and Conquered: Thomas Jefferson, Lewis & Clark,*

*and Manifest Destiny*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2006.

Provides much needed information on Manifest Destiny and the United States expansion westward.

Naruta, Anna Noel. *Creating Whiteness in California: Racialization Processes, Land, and Policy in the Context of California's Chinese Exclusion Movements, 1850 to 1910*. Ph.D diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2006. Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Dissertations Publishing, 2006.

This monograph offers a great description of how anti-Chinese immigration legislation helped create the origins of "White Identity" in Californian society. In addition, Noel offers a brief but informative description of the origins of anti-Chinese immigration in white laborers especially focusing on unemployed Irish immigrants.

Oakland Museum of California. "Gold Fever." Museumca.org. 1998. Accessed November 11, 2013. <http://www.museumca.org/goldrush/fever12.html>.

This website article provides an excellent account of how hard life was for miners during the gold rush years. This article is instrumental to my topic because shows how miners faced numerous challenges in mining camps such as alcohol and gambling addiction, and disease.

Oakland Museum of California. "Gold Fever." Museumca.org. 1998. Accessed November 11, 2013. <http://www.museumca.org/goldrush/fever13.html>.

This website article talks about some of the key mining techniques used by miners during the gold rush to find gold. This is key to my topic because it demonstrates how difficult the work was that miners had to go through in order to actually acquire gold.

Qin, Yucheng. *The Diplomacy of Nationalism: The Six Companies and China's Policy Toward Exclusion*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009.

This monograph offers a great description of Chinese immigration in the late Qing period to California by focusing on what provinces immigrants were coming from. In addition, Qin shows the challenges, such as nativist aggression and low wages, Chinese laborers faced once they arrived in California.

Saxton, Alexander. *The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California*. London, England: University of California Press, 1971.

The author of this monograph offers an extremely unique interpretation on origins of the nativist movement in California and this movement's view toward Chinese immigration in the mid-19th century. In addition, Saxton focuses on the important role Chinese immigrants played in the development of organized labor in California.

Spence, Jonathan D. *God's Chinese Son: The Taiping Heavenly Kingdom of Hong Xiuquan*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997.

This source gives great detail about the leader of the Taiping Rebellion as well as the rebellion itself. This source was key for my topic because it provides information which was extremely hard to find.

Spencer, Steve. *Race and Ethnicity: Culture, Identity and Representation*. London: New York: Routledge, 2006.

In this detailed description of immigration, Spencer examines how the idea of race and ethnicity changed as different countries experienced more immigration. This monograph covers topics ranging from the slave trade to Marxist interpretations of immigration. In addition, immigration and the results of the constantly changing idea of race and ethnicity are put into a global context.

Tong, Benson. *The Chinese Americans*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2000.

This in-depth monograph offers great background information on the causes behind Chinese immigration to the United States during the Qing dynasty and the challenges they faced when they were faced with racism and job discrimination. In addition, Benson offers an excellent description on the role people of Asian descent played in shaping United States history.

Unruh, John D. *The Plains Across: The Overland Emigrants on the Trans-Mississippi West, 1840-60*. 1st ed. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993.

This source provides excellent detail on the hardships average American migrant while coming across the United States.

Wong, Edlie. "Comparative Racialization, Immigration Law, and James Williams's Life and Adventures." *American Literature* 84, no. 4 (December 2012): 797-826.

In this well-developed monograph, Wong compares the similar challenges African Americans and Chinese immigrants faced in California as a result of nativism and racial sentiments held by white Californians during the mid to late-19th century.